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ABSTRACT

Because the skills needed for organizational effectiveness are typically communication based, many methods are available for communication trainers, including techniques originally designed to identify other cognitive and behavioral skills. The successful communication trainer can use these methods and measures, along with those directly aimed at improving communication abilities, to increase organizational participants' skills in perspective taking, self-monitoring, listening, and designing appropriate messages. Self-generated case studies and inventories are effective in organizations like juvenile court staffs, county government administration, insurance and manufacturing companies, and engineering firms, and are more effective with groups of members and longer-term training projects. Role playing and coaching can be used to develop listening and perception skills, and are more useful in shorter training programs, although the coaching method demands a longer investment of time and money. Because of a lack of evaluative methodology and because many programs are tailored to specific organizations, the effectiveness of each method is difficult to ascertain. (CRH)

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# DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS' COMMUNICATIVE ABILITIES: A RATIONALE FOR SPECIFIC METHODS

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DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS' COMMUNICATION ABILITIES:

A RATIONALE FOR SPECIFIC METHODS

The development of communication abilities is based on the assumption that various factors in the communication process can be isolated, studied individually and collectively, and understood in context. At the core of this assumption is the idea that skills related to communication can be developed. Reservations notwithstanding, we embrace this assumption and choose to lay out our claims about communication as a justification for our choice of methods to develop communication related abilities.

With Delia, O'Keefe & O'Keefe (1982) we agree that the study of communication focuses our attention on contexts in which participants organize perception and behavior around the mutual recognition that one or more persons intend to be understood by others. Communication is organized around participants "definition of the situation" (McHugh, 1968), and such definitions are the products of individuals' application of interpretive schemes to situated contexts. As Delia and Grossberg (1977) note, "communication . . . involves an emergent process in which social, that is to say intersubjective, reality is constructed" (p.36).

Two of the constituent aspects of this approach to communication are social construal processes and the development of a differentiated strategic behavioral repertoire (Delia et al., 1982). These characteristics are considered to undergird one's ability to produce listener-adapted messages, and adaptation in this respect seems to be a general requirement for communication effectiveness. As communicators develop the capacity to more effectively conceptualize the subjective perspectives and psychological characteristics of their listeners, they should be better able to reach shared understandings.

Skills related to the achievement of shared understandings and situated intentions are both cognitive and behavioral. Understanding others' psychological characteristics requires perspective-taking or role-taking abilities (for a review see Burleson,1983). Such behaviors as self-monitoring, listening, flexibility and interaction management also are considered to contribute to effective communication (for a review see Sypher, 1984). With this basis for understanding communication, the remainder of this paper is devoted to reviewing four ways of developing organizational members' communication related abilities. These four methods are case studies, self-inventories, role-playing, and coaching.

## Case Studies

Case studies can help develop the interpretive schemes of organization members by increasing the number, range and scope of classification devices they employ in making sense out of their organizational world. Persons who join established organizations enter a world which is already defined, interpreted, organized and meaningful, thus the successfulness of one's membership is dependent upon his or her ability to accommodate to this world. To aid in this accommodation, members are called upon to apply their interpretive schemes to situated contexts to accomplish behavioral intentions. The more diverse or differentiated their interpretive schemes, the greater the likelihood that behavioral strategies will result in accomplished intentions.

Based on these assumptions, the development of communication skills rests in part on enhancing or enriching cognitive systems. One possible avenue is to help organization members develop new schemas for understanding and behaving organizationally. Case studies prove to be a useful tool in developing multiple ways to view a situation.

The nation's top business schools have long advocated the use of case studies in preparing their graduates for the "real" world. What these case studies provide is an opportunity to explore the ways in which people feel, think, and behave in organizational situations. In effect, case studies afford participants an opportunity to increase their understanding of others' subjective perspectives.

Simply writing analyses of cases does not acheive these ends. Only through interaction are participants faced with alternative interpretations of situated behavior. Thus the trainer's role is one of presenting hypothetical or documented situations to participants and encouraging a discussion of their situational perspectives. The presentation of alternative interpretations has the potential to increase awareness and understanding of others' intentions, motives and communicative choices, all requirements for successful accommodation to an organization.

The most fruitful discussions develop around cases supplied by the participants. When organizational members generate their own situations to discuss and analyze, the development of organization specific interpretive schemes is more likely. Here is where on-site training programs designed for a specific group have the advantage over off-site programs designed for general audiences. When cases are generated by participants, the situations which persons are asked to analyze already have a level of meaning assigned to them. This meaning is only relevant to those who are members of the same social group.

One of the most frequent criticisms of the case method is that case study situations are unrelated to actual work situations (Argyris, 1980). Having the participants present their own situations is the best way to increase the potential of transfering learning to actual situations.

One such program was developed for a county government administrative staff including a newly elected judge, his appointees and other longer term employees. A morning session of a two-day workshop was designed to increase participants' awareness and understanding of communication problems in their organization. The group of 21 participants was divided into three groups and assigned the task of identifying and prioritizing communication related problems. Each subgroup shared their list with the entire group, and the key problems (those listed most often) were listed on the board. Each group was then asked to provide examples that illustrated the key problems. For each situation, the entire group was asked to take the perspective of the key actors and develop an understanding of their feelings and motives in the situation.

In essence, a decision-making model was used to develop cases and organize participants'discussion of the cases they provided. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1979) discuss the key elements in the decision making process: (1) setting goals, (2) identifying problems, (3) developing alternatives, (4) evaluating alternatives, (5) choosing alternatives, (6) implementing the decision, and (7) monitoring and evaluating the decision once implemented.

Because this type of training is limited to a workshop time frame, usually one to three days, the final parts of the decision making process (i.e. steps six and seven) are presented and participants are encouraged to complete these steps on their own. Often times follow-up sessions are organized to develop strategies for implementing decisions and evaluating their effectiveness. One of the biggest problems with this method is that the latter stages most often are not monitored.

Few is any empirical studies have investigated the successfulness of using case studies organized around a decision making model, however, feedback from the participants suggests this method can help develop communication related

abilities, especially perception skills. Participants have left these sessions saying, "I now see the situation more clearly"; "I never knew Jane or John felt that way"; "I can see why what I said bothered him"; "I need to listen better"; "Next time I will ask the others how they feel", etc.

This training method contributes to the development of communication in the following ways:

(1) participants increase their understanding of communication related problems,

(2) participants increase their understanding of one anothers' work-related perspectives,

(3) participants are encouraged to reach a consensus on desirable future behavior,

(4) opportunities to practice desired behavior are provided,

(5) participants are encouraged to monitor their own behavior.

This training method in no way ensures that increased understanding will result in changes in communication behavior. This does suggest, however, that interpretative schemes are linked to behavior and alterations in interpretation on perspective-taking have the potential to affect future communication behavior.

The ways in which increased understanding manifests itself in communication behavior is certainly not predictable. It will not do for a trainer to merely point out competing perspectives. He or she must go further in helping the audience arrive at shared understandings of the situation and a consensus for expected behavior. Such a consensus, no doubt, is constrained by the organization reality the members share and the organizational philosophy embraced. Case studies can be utilized to develop more person oriented communication behavior, but the ability to take others' perspectives in no way precludes the use of such knowledge for personal gain, i.e. manipulation, persuasion, coercion, etc. Nor

does the fact that participants possess such abilities suggest that participants will always use them. Thus a follow-up to increased understandings should include behavioral training. Methods related to behavioral development provide the content for the role-playing and coaching sections of this paper. But before moving to these discussions, a second method for developing communication related abilities is offered.

## Training Inventories

The variety of inventories available to use in developing communication related abilities is vast. The choice of the most useful ones, of course, is dependent on one's view of communication. In keeping with our social cognitive view of communication, we have chosen inventories designed to increase one's understanding of self and other role expectations and behaviors.

### Defensiveness Checklist

Gibb's (1961) defensiveness check list is among the inventories that can be used to help individuals develop communication abilities. And unlike many training inventories, this one is designed for both managers and nonmanagers. We have found this measure works best when external or in-house trainers use it to train managers who in turn train their own coworkers.

For this exercise, respondents are asked to describe work situations in which they become defensive and to check from a provided list the characteristics that best describe how they think and feel in such situations. A second part of this exercise requires respondents to fill out an "Incident Card" regarding the last situation in which they experienced defensiveness. Questions on this card ask participants to identify situations which arouse defensiveness, to describe communicative strategies and related feelings resulting from defensiveness, and to develop alternative strategies for anticipated future interactions.

Participants are encouraged to keep "Incident Cards" for a two to four week period so they will be able to predict defensiveness producing situations and plan their communicative strategies in advance.

Again the organizational philosophy embraced will determine whether a better understanding of communication is used to make situations more or less defensive. Clearly our position is that defensiveness is to be understood so that it can be reduced. The potential for shared understandings is decreased when either interactant communicate defensively.

Matching Motivators to People

A second inventory which can be used to develop perspective-taking and general other oriented communication abilities is a motivation exercise: "Matching Motivators to People." This inventory is designed especially for managers, but with increased participation and shared leadership, peers might also find this tool useful. This inventory provides a grid of motivation strategies for person types. The task is designed to encourage managers to take the perspective of employees, develop impressions of their work habits and personal characteristics, and choose, from a set of alternatives, appropriate strategies for motivating each individual. This task forces managers to become more other oriented when trying to motivate individuals.

Again persons from the same work group benefit the most from this exercise, because multiple perspectives of each worker can be generated and alternative ways of motivating can be discussed. Since different strategies necessarily result in different communicative choices, such an exchange among coworkers has the potential to increase one's repertoire of strategic behavior designed for motivating individual employees.

There are a variety of other motivated related inventories that can and have been used effectively to heighten managers' and coworkers' awareness of

the psychological characteristics of their work partners. Among those are the motivation exercises designed to increase one's understanding of self-esteem. In such exercises, participants are asked to select from a list of statements those which tend to generate defensiveness and/or erode self-esteem. These lists include statements such as, "Don't you think there's a better way to do it than the way you handled it?" or "I really thought you knew more than you do about this." Of course, both of these statements are considered among those that tend to erode self-esteem. Using the provided list, participants from the same work group can come to some agreement about the most and least effective means of communicating to enhance self-esteem. The real value in exercises like these is the focus on communication and its role in motivating employees and managing interpersonal relationships.

Leadership Measures

Because management has long been considered the key to organizational effectiveness, more work has gone into the development of leadership inventories than almost any other single type. Three of these inventories have been used on numerous occasions to aid managers in developing their communication related abilities. The strengths and weaknesses of the measures are included in the following discussion.

Managerial Grid. Blake and Mouton (1964, 1978) are considered among the pioneers in developing management training programs. Even though their philosophy has received substantial criticisms because of its focus on a "one best way" approach, the inventory they developed is not without merit. The Managerial Grid is one tool which can be used to heighten manager's understanding of how they communicate with employees. The 9 x 9 scoring grid identifies individuals as one of five possible management types. Some persons have argued that in spite of its intent, the Managerial Grid measures how people would like to be managed rather than

how they actually manage. Nonetheless, respondents are asked to choose between alternative ways of behaving and communicating, and they are forced to think and talk about the consequences of such behavior. We contend that an increased understanding of how one behaves or plans to behave is a prerequisite to increasing one's behavioral repertoire. Monitoring one's behavior is an important communication related ability that helps persons make appropriate and effective strategic choices, and inventories such as this one encourage participants to focus on their own rather than their coworkers' behavior.

Leadership Questionnaire. Bowers and Seashore (1966) developed a four-factor theory of leadership and designed a questionnaire based on these assumptions. Their Leadership Questionnaire was designed to measure four dimensions of leadership styles: interaction facilitation, support, goal emphasis, and work facilitation. Respondents receive scores on each of these dimensions.

The interaction facilitation dimension is especially useful in helping respondents identify communication strategies which facilitate interaction. However, Bowers and Seashore do not provide directions for implementing these leadership strategies. Similar to Blake and Mouton (1964) they assume a leadership style characterized by their four dimensions will be effective in all situations. Again we reject their philosophy, but find their inventory useful in providing a beginning point for understanding the relationship between communication and effective leadership.

LPC. The LPC measure was developed by Fiedler (1974) as a means of matching leaders to appropriate leadership situations. Unlike his predecessors, Fiedler suggested that different situations demand different leadership and communicative strategies. To measure leadership style (in this case either person or task

oriented), participants are asked to evaluate their Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) on 16 bi-polar adjectives. The participants who rate their LPC more positively receive higher scores, and those who rate their LPC more negatively, receive lower scores. The higher scores (>64) indicate person-oriented leaders; the lower scores (<64) indicate task-oriented leaders. Fiedler's assumption is that people who can see positive characteristics in coworkers with whom they least prefer to work are more people oriented.

One problem with using the LPC to measure leadership style is participants' rejection of Fiedler's assumption. Some persons argue that they may not have met their least preferred coworker, and consequently the measure is not stable. Others have argued that their leadership behavior should not be measured by their perceptions of one person. Researchers have even argued that the LPC may be more a measure of cognitive complexity than leadership style.

Regardless of these criticisms, the LPC is a useful tool for encouraging participants to think about their own and other's behavior. Because situational favorableness is based in part on leader-member relations, participants are asked to focus their attention on ways to improve this relationship. Communication is considered the vehicle through which such relationships are developed. Just as communication is context bound, so is leadership effectiveness. Thus, increasing participants' awareness of contextual factors affecting communication and leadership has the potential to increase effectiveness in both areas.

This selection of self inventories is by no means exhaustive nor necessarily the best such tools available. These are presented to underscore their potential utility in developing communication related abilities such as perspective-taking and self-monitoring.

For a communication trainer, these benefits override the intended use of the questionnaires, i.e. measures of leadership style, motivation, etc. These measures are used successfully only when experienced trainers organize discussions around how persons communicate, the consequences of communication, and specific strategies for avoiding or improving potential communication problems. Also we do not intend to suggest that self reports are necessarily a reflection of actual behavior. Since inventories are best suited to off-site training programs, trainers do not enjoy the luxury of observing actual behavior. When this ideal situation is not possible, participants' reports of their behavior are the only means of identifying how respondents behave, and this we feel, is a starting point for increasing understanding and potentially changing behavior.

Since we believe as many other situation theorists, that leadership and communication effectiveness are dependent upon one's ability to adapt to the demands of the situation, the leadership measures developed from this perspective would be considered most useful. However, even the behavioral measures have their utility in increasing understanding of communication. The success of any of these measures rests in the trainee's willingness to reflect on his or her behavior and, with the aid of the trainer, develop alternative perspectives and communication strategies.

## Role Playing

Role playing gives participants an opportunity to practice desired skills in a context close to the situation in which they will actually employ the new learning (Goldstein & Sorcher, 1974; Kraut, 1976; Burnaska, 1976; Moses & Ritchie, 1976; Byham, Adams & Kiggins, 1976; Smith, 1976; Ivancevich & Smith, 1981; Kurecka, Austin, Johnson & Mendoza, 1982). The strength of role playing as a technique lies in its hybrid nature--not quite real, and yet very close to it.

Because the situation simulates the real thing, it assists participants in getting a "feel" for the use of the new skill. Because the training is not quite real, it allows for experimentation, coaching, retrials, and feedback of a sort that is rarely experienced in daily living.

Role playing, properly accomplished, allows a direct focus on perspective-taking and perception skills, including self-perception. Depending on the particular training strategy, participants may be requested either to play the role of themselves or to pretend to be another person, either a composite character or someone known, whose situation is familiar to the participant/actor.

Self perception and listening skills especially are strengthened when participants play the role of themselves or someone with a role very similar to theirs in real life. This happens because the training situation allows one to act in one's own familiar role, while at the same time bringing the experience to more conscious attention, with the result of increased learning.

If the participant takes the role of a person other than her/himself, the communication skill most likely to be enhanced is perspective-taking. The more automatic perspective-taking process which occurs during communication is more conscious when persons pretend to be someone else.

While some trainers enjoy using role plays, others are reluctant. This may be a result of participants initial resistance and fear of the technique. Successful trainers have found that participants who try the technique often report surprise at how well they understood the person whose role they played. They also reported that they could behave and act as that person would in the specified situation.

We have recently used the role playing technique in two different settings. In the first, newly hired legal services lawyers, who have legal "book learning" but no courtroom experience, spend a week developing and practicing trial skills. Role plays are used throughout the training. On the first day participants

meet their "clients," sometimes played by local actors, sometimes by people who actually represent the community from which legal services clients come--the poor.

During the first day, the participant interviews the "client" to learn what her/his legal problem is. The problem, of course, is carefully predetermined, and will serve as the basis of the lawyer's work for the rest of the week. Because of the disparity between the background and experiences of the lawyer and client in this role play, considerable trainer attention is devoted to teaching the skills of empathic listening, and to demonstrating the ways in which these skills impact on the lawyer's ability to get the accurate and complete information needed to begin work on the client's case. The persons playing the role of clients also participate directly in the training by sharing with their lawyer how they reacted to specific events in the interview process.

On succeeding days, the lawyer/participants conduct negotiation sessions with the opposing side, construct a case strategy, prepare their "client" for the trial, and ultimately conduct a complete mock trial in the presence of a "judge" and sometimes a "jury." Role playing is essential for the success of the simulation. As the week progresses, most participants experience increasing ease in the role playing, and the episodes assume an aura closer and closer to reality. In preparation for the trial on the last day, lawyers stay up late, experience performance anxiety, and at the trial itself manifest all the symptoms of nervousness characteristic of performing the same activity in real life. The role play situation provides them with an important opportunity where many aspects of reality are present, including performing complex skills under pressure, but where failure is permissible, and even expected, with no real client suffering from beginner mistakes.

The second role play setting has some similarity to the first, since it involves on-the-job training to foster specific performance skills. In this situation, the training group was comprised of the supervisors of social workers who provide services to families of abused children. The weeklong training focuses on the development of teaching or mentoring skills i.e. creating and reinforcing an image of the supervisor as teacher. Specifically, one day of the training focuses on feedback skills. Supervisors use role plays (1) to practice working with a social worker to identify skills which the worker needs to improve; (2) to reach agreement about the supervisor's role in observing and coaching the worker in specific, limited skills areas; and (3) to conduct a performance critique of a social worker's interaction with a client, following the agreements reached in steps one and two.

The training uses a feedback model to make the point that giving effective feedback involves more than seat-of-the-pants assessments, and that most people need considerable practice in distinguishing and delivering helpful positive and negative feedback. The practice is made possible in the supervisor's training by the role play technique which the supervisors use extensively throughout the day. In this training, the supervisors are required to role play their own and their social workers roles. The role play appears to work well in this situation partly because the supervisors know the work of their supervisees quite well, and they find that they can play their roles with ease.

Role playing has acquired a rather suspicious reputation in training circles because it is a technique which can fail, and some of its failures are spectacular. The authors' experiences in using role plays in training

leads to a few brief points about using the technique successfully.

Role plays are more likely to be successful if:

(1) The participants trust the trainers and the training situation.

(2) The initial role plays are introduced with substantial structure, sometimes including a script, so that the trainee experiences as little performance anxiety as possible about the role play process.

(3) The role participants are asked to play is either their own or one very close to their experience and awareness.

(4) "Free form" role plays, in which the participants are asked to devise content based on a brief scenario, should take place after some other role play experiences have been mastered.

(5) Humor is built into the role play situation and supported by the trainers.

Role playing, in summary, is an important training method which requires some sophistication to get optimum results. It is a direct form of practice in the communication skills of perspective taking and self-perception, and it can be used to enhance listening skills and other communication abilities as well.

## Coaching: One-on-one training

One-on-one training, or coaching, involves one trainer providing specific assistance to one trainee. It has been used most frequently by chief executive officers and high level managers, perhaps because few other individuals within an organization are considered important enough or have the authority necessary to commit funds to such an apparently expensive training project.

Coaching may focus on one predefined skill, such as learning to run effective meetings, or it may be preceded by a client's request for general assistance. Coaching can be used to improve a client's communication skills,

such as listening, formulating clear and consistent verbal and written messages to subordinates or coworkers, and improving confusing or inconsistent nonverbal communication habits.

One of the authors recently used coaching as a method of assisting a new human service agency director in the acquisition of management skills. The client, a professional in the agency prior to his appointment as director, felt confused by the change in his role. The client's agency contracted for ten days of consulting time to assist the director in making the transition.

The trainee spent the initial three days of the designated time visiting the director at his program site and identifying his training needs. At the end of the three days, the trainer and director identified self confidence building and projection as key areas for training. The remaining days of the project were spread over a nine-month period and were controlled largely by the client, who identified specific events when he felt it would be important to feel and demonstrate self confidence. Using the information gathered at the outset of the project, the trainer coached the director in preparation for these specific events (i.e. board meetings and staff priority-setting processes). We used suggested readings, role plays with feedback, and critiques of written material. In addition, the trainer assisted the director in developing an understanding of the skills required for good management, and affirming that the director, in fact, possessed those skills in ample supply.

One of the authors also participated in a large-scale version of this sort of training in which the expert assistance was provided by experienced peers rather than outside consultants. In the late 1970's and early 1980's increased funding for the national Legal Services Corporation resulted in the creation of literally hundreds of new legal services programs, each with a new director. Most of these directors, like the client in the example above,

were confident of their professional skills as lawyers, but they found the world of management bewildering.

In an effort to provide them with some affordable assistance, the Legal Services Corporation established a "buddy" program. Experienced program directors who were willing to spend 13 days during the course of a year were recruited to serve as buddies, or mentors, to many of the new directors. Three of the 13 days were spent in training. The training, which used a "live laboratory" case study, taught basic consultation skills, including an introduction to organizational assessment, active listening, feedback, and interpersonal communication skills.

Following the training, the experienced directors were each paired with one new director, using a process of matching whenever possible on the basis of similarity (same state, same program size, and so on). The two directors then began a process of identifying the new director's needs and matching those with the experienced director's skills whenever possible. The exact areas of work were defined by the two people involved, just as in the case previously discussed.

The initial experiment was so successful that the Legal Services Corporation repeated the training and matching cycle several times, and eventually extended the buddy system to directors of special (non-direct service) projects. Participating new directors felt the most important part of the training was having someone to talk to about their work.

The success of coaching depends upon the right match between the client and the trainer. Coaching may have a greater success rate than other forms of training simply because bad situations are terminated early. A client who is purchasing one-on-one training is likely to shop carefully for a person

likely to work well with her/him, and if the relationship proves to be less than useful, it is usually terminated quickly. On the other hand, coaching experiences that are successful usually result in long-term working relationships and even friendships between the client and trainer.

In summary, coaching is an intensive form of training in which one trainer works to meet the needs of an individual client. The successfulness of this method also depends upon a good "fit" between client and trainer. A helping and trusting relationship is more important in this training situation than in any of the other types discussed in this paper. Unfortunately this type of training is limited to clients who are willing to make the necessary investment of time and those who are able to pay for the trainer's expertise.

## Summary

The purpose of this paper has been to point out the variety of methods from which trainers can choose to develop communication related abilities. Because the skills needed for organizational effectiveness are typically communication based, many methods are available for communication trainers, including techniques originally deisgned to identify other cognitive and behavioral skills. The successful communication trainer can use these methods and measures, along with those more directly aimed at improving communication abilities, to increase organizational participants' skills in perspective-taking, self-monitoring, listening and designing appropriate messages.

The most glaring difference between the methods presented in this paper is their level of specificity. Case studies and inventories were discussed, for the most part, in general rather than specific terms. We have found self generated case studies and inventories to be effective in a variety of organizations including juvenile court staffs, county government administration, insurance and manufacturing companies, engineering firms, human services and

other nonprofit organizations. One key to using case studies and inventories effectively is to use them with groups of members from the same organization so that context specific alternatives can be generated and discussed. The final two methods differ from the first two in that they are discussed in terms of specific programs. The role-playing and coaching sections include specific examples of how these methods were used to developing listening and perception skills.

A second difference between these methods is the length of time a trainer spends with the participating organizational members. Case studies and inventories are especially useful when actual work-related communication behavior cannot be observed; such is the case with short-term training projects. Role-playing also can be used for shorter training programs, but the example presented in this paper suggests the benefits of a long term role play aimed at improving communication skills. The coaching method, on the other hand, demands a much longer investment of time and money, and perhaps is used less often because of these demands.

A final difference between these methods is the measurement of their effectiveness. For short-term training programs, the measure of effectiveness most often is respondents' feedback at the close of the sessions. At best, trainer's may solicit or be provided with participants evaluation of the training. As recent reviews (Goldstein, 1980; Wexley, 1984) reveal, too few investigations have sought to measure the effectiveness of specific training methods. For programs tailored to specific organizations, the task of measuring effectiveness is even more difficult; however Wexley (1984) contends that a great deal of progress has been made in evaluation methodology. On the other hand, the strength of the coaching method is that results are observable first hand. Trainers can adapt their programs to the progress they observe. This advantage is invaluable in ensuring successful training.

Because of the large number of training methods available, the communication trainer's choice of techniques is based, for the most part, on one's framework for understanding effective communication and feedback from participants. More systematic comparisons of the effectiveness of various methods is essential. Longitudinal studies appear necessary for making such evaluations.

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